



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 16, 2013

MEDIA CONTACTS

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253
Krista Thompson | 928.637.5603
Jolene Holgate | 928.871.7160
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

**Resources and Development Committee approves
proposed FY14 comprehensive budget for 3 Navajo divisions, 1 agency**

WINDOW ROCK – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee approved and recommended to the Budget and Finance Committee the proposed Fiscal Year 2014 budgets for three Navajo divisions and one Navajo agency: Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency, Division of Economic Development, Division of Community Development, and Division of Transportation.

RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) sponsored the four legislations relating to division budgets for the upcoming fiscal year.

“After some significant work, we have come back with the directives of the RDC and have changed some budget figures,” said Delegate Benally.

Legislation No. 0238-13, pertaining to the Navajo Nation EPA FY14 budget of \$9.4 million, passed unanimously with a vote of 3-0.

“We have always worked well with the RDC and have always done our best to work with the budget we’ve been allocated,” said EPA executive director Stephen Etsitty. “We have been receiving annual grants with little reductions, but we have heard that reductions are going to start happening in 2015.”

Legislation No. 0235-13, pertaining to the Navajo Nation DED FY14 budget of \$6.02 million, passed with one amendment to include two conditions of appropriation.

According to 12 N.N.C §810, a condition of appropriation places a specific contingency on an appropriation by the Navajo Nation Council. Appropriated funds or any other funds received by the Navajo Nation by which a condition of appropriation is place, may not be lawfully expended until the condition of appropriation is met.

The first COA requires the DED to submit a plan of operation, which provides for more technical and financial resources to regional offices, while maintaining essential regulatory and administrative offices at their central offices, to RDC by the end of the FY14 first quarter.

The second COA approves the carry-over of the FY13 Navajo Land Title Data System budget for the Navajo Real Estate Department.

The RDC voted 3-0 to approve the Division of Economic Development FY14 budget.

Legislation No. 0237-13, pertaining to the Navajo Division of Community Development FY14 budget of \$44.8 million, passed unanimously with one amendment to include two COA's.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake), said he believes chapter staff neglect their main responsibilities due to excessive travel and training.

The first COA requires the division to implement a process where chapter officials and employees sign necessary consent forms, authorizing banks to permit the Navajo Office of Auditor General and the agency Local Governance Support Center "view-only" access, for the purpose of enabling the OAG and LGSC to continue audit and monitoring responsibilities.

The second COA requires the division to implement a policy that will cap training and traveling expenses at \$10,000 for elected officials and administrative staff at each respective chapter within the first quarter.

"I like the new language of the budget, we definitely need to always take care of the Navajo people's money," said Delegate Tsosie. "It seems that training is becoming a way to make money off the chapters."

The RDC voted 3-0 to approve the FY14 budget for the Division of Community Development.

Legislation No. 0234-13, pertaining to the Navajo Division of Transportation FY14 budget of \$19.7 million, passed unanimously with an amendment to include two COA's for the division to fulfill within the first quarter of FY14.

The first COA requires NDOT to receive technical assistance from the Navajo Tax Commission in order to develop a plan to receive all Fuel Excise Taxes collected without Navajo Nation set-aside, and to meet with the Speaker of the Arizona State Legislature to revisit the \$4 million tax agreement.

The second COA requires NDOT to select two civil engineers for an Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignment with the Bureau of Indian Affairs Roads Department for Navajo Nation capacity building, to assume certain responsibilities of the BIA roads. Sections for the positions will be made in the first quarter and shall not exceed two years.

"I would like chapter planners to be better qualified to truly do the chapter some good," said RDC member Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle). "I'm concerned with how much training it would take to get our planners up-to-date. The second COA should help our communities."

The RDC voted 3-0 to approve the NDOT FY14 budget.

The four approved budgets now move on to the Budget and Finance Committee for consideration.

#

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org